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 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Khor Al-Zubair Tech Center Rehab Improves Community Skills

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BASRAH, Iraq—The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently completed the rehabilitation of the basic infrastructure of the Khor Al-Zubair vocational technical center in al-Zubair district in southern Basrah province.

"The completed rehab project aims to provide a renovated facility that will promote vocational education for all Iraqis," said James Hodges, the chief construction representative with the Basrah Area Office, Gulf Region South district.

"The school is now capable of providing training in a wide variety of trades and skills which can be further applied upon graduation," Hodges said. "We really had a great visit with the head master, the contractor and the local people who are involved with the Khor Al-Zubair project. It's very exciting to be able to turn over a completed project that helps the local community."

Hodges said the work enables the school to start teaching skills to more community people.

"Really, I was very happy to be a part of the team with the head master and the school staff. I'm encouraged to see the change in the school," he added.

The \$1.5 million project renovated two facilities comprised of more than 24 workshops, said the Basrah Area Office Iraqi Deputy Resident Engineer Al.

According to Al, more than 6,000 square meters of new metal siding and about 1,400 lighting fixtures including wiring were installed. The water and sewer



The new main entrance gate at Khor Al-Zubair tech center, which supports the needs of 600 students. (USACE photo by A. Al Bahrani)

system were upgraded, including tanks, pumps and underground piping networks.

"The work also included renovating and outfitting the existing administration building, classrooms and computer lab at the vocational technical center in addition to replacing the old 1600 meter fence with a 3 meter high brick masonry wall," said Al.

Head Master of the Khor Al-Zubair vocational technology center, Ali Al Aibee said that since established in 1976 the school has received no maintenance or upgrade work. "The school is now ready to support the needs of 600 students and we hope to increase this number in the future, thanks to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers," added the head master.

According to the Basrah Area Engineer Daniel Foltz, cooperation was the most

important element that made the Khor Al-Zubair vocational technology center project successful; cooperation between GRS and the head master and the cooperation of the community.

"With the community's support, GRS will be able to work more in Khor Al-Zubair with follow on work at the votech as well as on other projects that will help the community," Foltz explained.

Foltz said this project is very important to the locals as it provides them with the opportunity to learn skills that can improve both their community and their families' standard of living.

Head Master Al Aibee said, "We are very fortunate to meet Mr. Hodges and to work together with the GRS to complete this critical project which will help the Iraqis to develop their skills and participate in rebuilding their country."

Hodges said the project began in October 2007 and was completed on March 23, 2008. Khor Al-Zubair district (population 64,000) will benefit from greater skills in the community and improved employment opportunity for residents.



Students practicing welding work in one of the 24 workshops in the Khor Al-Zubair tech center renovated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. (USACE photo by A. Al Bahrani)

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